The Arts as a Metaphor for Learning about Self: Four Stories in a Teacher Narrative

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Introduction

A complex dialectic occurs between the areas of research, teacher development, and pedagogy in the field of education. Researchers, teacher educators, and teachers are key players in co-construction of this community of scholarship. The role of curriculum through the commonplaces of teacher, learner, subject matter and milieu/setting (Schwab, 1971) is pivotal to our understanding and development of reflective practices. In this Narrative self-inquiry I explore my development as a teacher/researcher thus revealing the complexity of self within constructed and shared narrative. Using arts-based approaches I will illustrate reflective educational research. In this example, the arabesque[1] is used to demonstrate subjectivity and the multiple layering of self through an understanding of numbers and patterns in dance and mathematics. The arabesque is a decorative floral design in Moorish art used inside buildings, mainly mosques (Wade, 1976). My rationale for using the arabesque with its linear and flowing movement is intended to illustrate a creative process where art and science blend in an aesthetic effect. Through this exploration I try to show the complex layers of self that inform a teacher's understanding of her own teaching.

In this paper thus, reflective practice is explored through narrative. Reflective practices are foundational to every area of the field and bears upon all the key players i.e., researchers, teacher educators, and teachers relative

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to the individual and the social (Dewey, 1997). What's more, community is key to healthy growth, that important criterion of continuity (Dewey, 1997) that relates to all learners in classrooms. Our work is about making positive contributions to people's lives. Engaging in research, teacher development and pedagogy enables us to continue building bridges and communities wherein reflective practices can be nurtured and shared.

Narrative

Connelly and Clandinin argue, "[o]ne of our tasks in writing narrative accounts is to convey a sense of the complexity of all the 'I's' all of the ways each of us have of knowing" (1991). I discuss using a narrative inquiry approach relative to curriculum. Three key areas arising in curriculum and teacher development research literature in relation to mind, body spirit and our Earth is discussed. The second section is organised around Schwab's (1971, 1971, 1971, 1973, 1983) four commonplaces of curriculum. Using a narrative inquiry approach, I explore my sense of place as it relates to curriculum and teacher development. I organise this discussion around two questions, what is curriculum? and what is teacher development? Through an exploration of narrative I address the topic of reflective practice.

Reflective practice in an exploration of narrative

In recent years teacher narratives (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988; 1990) have become important data for research into curriculum, teaching, and learning. Research literature on teacher narratives reveals that teaching practice, teacher education and pedagogy (Carter, 1993) can be influenced and improved through examination of 'image, rules, principles, and personal philosophy; metaphor, cycles and rhythms; and narrative unity' (Carter, 1993; Clandinin, 1989; Connelly, Clandinin & He, 1997) in experience narratives.

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) suggest "the study of narrative, therefore, is the study of the ways humans experience the world." Drawing upon Connelly and Clandinin's idea of the teacher as curriculum maker (1988), my understanding of curriculum is that it is a course of action of one's life. Life focussed on educative experience (Dewey, 1997). Curriculum is also a 'topic of concern in its own right' and 'a field of professional endeavour' (Jackson, 1992). I understand the process of writing narrative is 'like writing curriculum' (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988). Therefore, through my personal stories of lived experience, I seek to illuminate my understanding of how curriculum and teacher development inform each other.

Three key terms identified in the literature deal with relationships, people and place. These terms are concerned with teaching practices, learning, education and educational institutions [such as schools], with emphasis on the

place of the classroom and relationships that evolve among people i.e. teachers, students, administrators, curriculum writers relative to what is taught. These include the use and support of resource materials, experts, and technology. Within narrative inquiry, the study of lived experience is central to the development of my personal practical knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly,1989; 1992; Connelly & Clandinin, 1985) and informs my pedagogy and my development as a teacher.

My view of curriculum includes an understanding of self in relationship with others, and through individual commitment to our Earth and to each other (Abram, 1996; Berman, 1981; 1989, Lovelock, 1979) we become social, we build community. My family upbringing, Jewish teaching and learning influence my thinking and understanding. My work and knowledge about education and teaching is also influenced by the thought and work of John Dewey (1897, 1926, 1997). As a woman who is a teacher, my interests draw upon issues that deal with the feminisation of women's bodies and minds (Brownmiller, 1984; Stoler, 1996), the role of silence and the expression of voice (Belenky, et al, 1986; Grumet, 1988; Minh-ha, 1989; Fuss, 1989), the role of the imagination (Darroch-Lozowski, 1990; Greene, 1978,1995), the construction of knowledge (Belenky,Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Fuss, 1989) , and the ethic of care (Gilligan, 1993; Steedman, 1986) relative to teaching. In my thinking and teaching I draw from many areas e.g., English Literature, literary theory, and dance. Throughout this discussion of teacher development within the field of curriculum I include my developing interest in holistic education.

In my early childhood and elementary schooling I found a sense of pleasure and achievement in my physical ability to explore movement. The rhythms of classical music provided me with accompaniment and space to dance i.e., music provided the catalyst at one time and at another time music supported movements. I felt a sense of wholeness in those early years and in my learning there was never a sense of separation between mind and body. I reflect on my stories about learning dancing and mathematics to understand the connections between dance, mathematics and self.

My inquiry led me to memories of conversations with my father and I recall a book of mathematics that contained pictures of topology, numbers, etc. My parents are balletomanes and frequent patrons of the ballet. My father also loved language and talked about the origins of words, I grew up immersed in stories (e.g., Greek myths about gods and goddesses who ruled the world). My inquiry led me to the arabesque in ballet and using my father's method of tracing the origin of the word. I began to research my old dance books and books on Moorish architecture and then in full circle I returned to my old books on mathematics. I had always known the arabesque[2] had roots in the word 'arab' but I did not really know its root meaning.

Reflective Educational Research and Pedagogy

Acknowledging the body and mind connection rather than 'mind - body dualism' in learning and teaching in classrooms is important for both the learner and teacher (Dewey, 1926) and is key to our understanding of the role of experience. As Johnson (1987) states 'all knowledge is bodily based'. My understanding of curriculum is holistic and experiential, related to body connected with life inside and outside schools. Life, not restricted to one's body, but always concerned with body in relationship with mind and spirit, and with the greater connection of mind, body and spirit of the Earth (Lovelock, 1979). These key ideas dealing with relationships, people and place are explicit, occurring as a dialectical interaction.

Emphasis on relationships is key to cultivating a community of learners through which growth can proceed. The community of inquirers in educational research and pedagogy is important for researchers, educators, and teachers. Within a community, ideas evolve and questions are formulated on the notion of bridging relationships between teachers and children in classrooms. Through this dialectic of reading, researching, writing and the application of ideas, questions and inquiry, teaching and conversation in the community sustains a momentum of healthy growth. All members benefit through ongoing critique and debate as they hone their ideas and practices. Among arts-based inquirers sharing, celebration of ideas, and the importance of questions about enriching people's lives contribute to the community of inquiry. Reflection on past stories through experimentation with media, writing forms, provides a rich space for inquiry.

Using an arts-based approach

Arts-based approaches allow scope for examining representations of language such as symbol, image, film, video, texts, popular art, music and culture as artifacts of contemporary culture (Diamond and Mullen, 1999). It includes examination of the Western canon and does not preclude non-dominant views, voices, and interpretations. Arts-based approaches allow me as an educator and qualitative researcher to 'cobble' together ideas using imagination (Greene, 1978) as I create, transform, critique, promote shifts in thinking through intellectual, 'artful' inquiry (Diamond and Mullen, 1999) and writing. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) refer to the 'fifth moment' of qualitative inquiry that shapes the research process as 'multicultural and gendered'. They contend it is a moment characterised by a spirit of inquiry where "the center lies in the humanistic commitment of the qualitative researcher to study the world always from the perspective of the interacting individual" (Lincoln and Denzin, 1994). In examining my own stories I learned that,

through the multiple layers of selves, I co-construct with others a reality that is unique for me. Moreover, inquiry into narrative is an inquiry into self (Olney, 1972). I cannot recall my first encounter with an arabesque in ballet. The movement was part of the language of dance that I had learned as a child. I had seen and knew the dance position, arabesque before I learned the name. Later in my studies I learned to use Benesh notation to record arabesques among the myriad other movements within the dances.

Layers of selves

I have attempted in this paper to reveal the layers of selves like the palimpsest in Western literature (Diamond, 1998). Similarly, the metaphor of arabesque reveals the layers of selves. During the Renaissance the arabesque design was revived and imitated from the traditions of Islamic architectural design. However, it was only the floral and flowing leaves of the design that was copied so that the depth and multi layering of meaning were lost. The word 'arabesque' came from the French, which came from 'arabesco' the Italian word meaning 'in the Arab style'. In music the arabesque refers to a piece of music with an elaborate melody (e.g., Claude Debussy's 'Deux Arabesques').

As I grew older, it was always to play the role, to dance Juliet or Giselle (Guest, 1970; Sorell, 1981; Wilson, 1974) in the ballets that motivated me to work in ballet classes. The ballets of choreographer John Cranko appealed to me. I became enthralled with the way he told stories through the dancing. The music, familiar tunes from the ballet set off pictures of movement inside my head, within my whole body as I daydreamed. Stories from the ballet were familiar as they came from my knowledge and experience of fairy tales and stories I read. Ballet and fairy tales were a very real part of my existence. As a child, I would look in the garden or in wooded areas hoping to catch a glimpse of the fairies that lived there. Now I look within myself.

I learned social skills in regular school, in ballet school and at home. In my first year of school my teacher and my peers made me feel that I was very talented at drawing pictures. Like Buttignol, I never thought of myself as a creative person (Buttignol, 1998). I just drew what I thought was pleasing to my eye. As I grew older, my creativity was limited to the boundaries of other people's expectations and thought. In other words, I censored my work by heeding the voice of reason in order to be accepted by other people. What I created soon became something that was unrecognisable to me. Other people appreciated it but I detested my creation. I began to do work that was devoid of my own emotions, I made certain that passion was absent, I learned that passion was inappropriate.

I recall performing onstage in a ballet during my second year of university. I had to do a series of pas de basques with another girl, a joyous interlude within the ballet. I caught a glimpse of the face of the girl who danced with me, her face was different from what I normally recalled, a stupid smile was plastered on her face as she played up to the audience. In that moment, I really hated what was happening. I had come to dance with a quiet passion. I thought that performance was make-believe, storytelling and fun. Now I began to see people around me who thought dance was splash, pizzazz and that things had to be overdone, a "put on" for the audience. Dancing for an audience was an honour for me. It was something I did for people, not to people.

I felt unhappy and dissatisfied. What I was doing was losing meaning for me. Later, as I continued my studies one of the professors whose dancing I admired wrote that I had a naturalness onstage. Later on he reminded me, "Don't hide your talent beneath a bushel". I loved dancing but I always felt a deep sadness knowing that during Apartheid a person classified coloured/mixed race would not be permitted to dance as a full member of any professional dance company in South Africa. I eventually left to study dance in Canada.

I have a childhood memory of a perfect Summer evening with my father and brother. The moon was full and clear and I could see the shapes on its surface. I remember my father saying that some people called it 'the man in the moon' because if you looked closely you could see his face. I looked and looked, all I could see was a lovely yellow globe and wondered whether there was a little girl like myself looking down at me. I once had a similar feeling and thought as I stood at the edge of the ocean looking out at the horizon. Telling myself, that across the ocean was another land and more ocean and more land and on and on and then everything became a circle in my head. I began to see myself looking at myself looking out across the ocean, as though I were looking in a circle. I think that those were my first experiences of self.

Teacher Development

I examine the links between my social experience of gender, race, and class in South Africa bridging the social links with my experience in Canada. My personal story of learning and personal experience stories is explored through the arabesque movement. I address the question, 'What is teacher development?' Reflection on the stories provides me with openings for understanding. I reconstructed the South African experience to grow and to develop my potential as a learner.

Arabesque, a metaphor for subjectivity

With Barthes' *Camera Lucida* in mind I incorporated arabesque and elements from Moorish design in the paper as visual fragments that represent the complexity of self (Barthes, 1964). Arabesque is my metaphor for subjectivity, - linking patterns and numbers - enhancing my understanding of the philosophical and aesthetic connection between art and science. These visual elements of Islamic pattern (Albarn et al., 1974; Wade, 1976) also serve as reminders of the multiple layering of an individual's lived experiences. Arts-based inquiry using the arabesque reveals hierarchies and fragments throughout personal, social, educational, and professional experiences. Moreover, the arabesque reveals the fragments and hierarchies throughout allowing me to interpret layers of meaning as I bridge my professional and educational experiences. Developing an understanding of my ways of knowing I am thus able to meet challenges, cope with problems, and learning to adapt and develop the skills from one experience to another.

Movement and memory

My memories are filled with blue skies and puffy white clouds, tall mountains lush and green looming in the background as though watching over me. This was the Cape Town that I grew up in. What does a sense of place (Moore, 1984; Tuan, 1971, 1977) like South Africa do to a young girl as she grows up? I have fond memories of blue waters and frothy foamy waves on the ocean, that wondrous salty smell of a fresh ocean breeze on any day of the year. It seems that within my brain recognition of smells are programmed that can conjure up memories of things that happened long ago. When an odour or scent reaches me, pictures, thoughts, feelings and emotions pleasant or unpleasant are unlocked. Rocky tide pools filled with all sorts of creatures that fascinated me. As a child I learned to pick the periwinkles from the rocks and took them home. My grandmother never touched them, but my uncle cooked the periwinkles over a camp stove in the backyard and we were allowed to snack on them. A straight pin worked effectively to retrieve the 'meat' from the inside of the shell. My uncle tutored me in mathematics in high school.

Ms Chrimes had taught me since my first year in ballet school. She taught by example. I had seen her perform in many company productions before she injured her back and became a fulltime teacher at the university ballet school. Ms Chrimes was the kind of dancer that I hoped to become someday. I learned very late in my own career that the best dancer I ought to become or should have aimed for was the best dancer that I could be. I learned very late to develop my own talent and style, I was so busy attempting to please and imitate the model I saw in the teachers I had and the

performers I studied. I think that was part of the reason I felt so empty and unhappy when I performed. I tried to do things the way other dancers did. I loved to dance in classes, but hated performance. I also knew deep down that professional dance companies in South Africa were restricted to Whites only.

Years later in Canada I would meet White South African expatriates who attempted to maintain the old status of oppression in their encounters with me. Their conversation consisted of a line of questioning that would determine my racial classification according to Apartheid so that the questioner could treat me accordingly. I felt the old feelings of powerlessness, humiliation and subservience. Later I understood that much of what occurred in the encounters were partly my responsibility. I had to learn and I am still learning that the old behaviours were embodied in who I was. What I lived in South Africa I carried within me, and the source for transforming the pattern lay within me. The complexity of who I am is a multiplicity of layers of culture, language, class, gender and race knowledge. Like Hunt (1987) it took me a long time and consistent work to begin to understand that to improve my teaching practice and to develop as a researcher I needed to begin with myself. I remember thinking "No, this is Canada, I do not have to tolerate this invasion of privacy nor do I have to accept people's rudeness." Someday I may perhaps do a study of former South Africans' perpetuation of apartheid attitudes and perceptions toward and among each other in Canada. Many researchers speak about 'cultural baggage' (Kirby and Mckenna, 1989). As individuals who have come from diverse populations and countries around the globe we all bring our experiences, attitudes and perceptions to bear on our relations and interactions with other people.

One becomes a participant through critique and reflection on the links between her / his own stories of teaching, learning, of lived experience and those of other arts-based inquirers. Using stories, pictures, music, movement, and various media drawn from our personal and professional stories as arts-based inquirers we communicate concepts thereby finding a blending among the hierarchies and fragments. Similarly, in examples of collage or palimpsest, wherein pieces construct and form a layering of the whole engage the participant in the co-construction of inquiry. In arts-based inquiry the observer becomes the observed (Diamond and Mullen, 1999). The metaphors and images resonate with the lives of learners and teachers, and other arts-based inquirers. In this dialectic I develop teaching approaches to accommodate the different learning styles. Particularly useful is the three-part narrative inquiry process of examining meaning i.e., recovery, reconstruction and retelling (Clandinin and Connelly, 1988) for understanding my South African stories of experience as it informs my teaching practice in Canada.

Reflective practices and understanding research in education

Stories capture examples of reflective practices and can provide understanding about research in education. I frame this part of my paper using Schwab's four commonplaces of curriculum: teacher, learner, subject matter, and milieu (Schwab, 1971,1971,1971, 1973, 1983; Fox, 1985; Connelly & Clandinin, 1992; Clandinin & Connelly, 1992). These stories illustrate my evolving understanding of teacher development and curriculum. Stories include my personal and professional growth (Dewey, 1997) from learner to teacher through my personal experiences. I examine the stories for understanding my personal practical knowledge as it informs my teaching practice in Canada. I relate four stories to highlight the commonplaces of curriculum, i.e., teacher, learner, subject matter, and milieu in my narrative.

Teacher

At various points in my education, I received training as a dancer, teacher of dance and elementary school teacher. I attended ballet school before my formal elementary schooling. My dance training continued with my academic education in South Africa and in Canada in two major schools of ballet at elementary, high school and university levels. In my high school mathematics classes, I learned that I had to regurgitate what was taught in order to pass examinations. I had the distinct understanding from the teacher that the textbook to be followed and contained everything I needed to know. Textbook information structured my thinking and knowledge about what I learned and how I learned it. The teacher had the correct answer and the teacher's way determined how I was required to respond to questions posed. All knowledge in school was passed along through a method that is variously referred to as 'the banking model' (Freire, 1971) and 'received knowledge' (Belenky et al, 1986).

Learner

When I entered the faculty of education I learned that I had knowledge to share and that I could construct knowledge with other people. This realisation and insight led me to rethink my way of being with the children I taught when I moved to a First Nations community. English was learned as a second language and I drew on the wealth of resources available through the relationships I developed with elders, adults and especially the children in the class during that first year of teaching. I also found the balance between the requirements of creating long and short-range plans, monthly, weekly and day plans and co-creating knowledge with the children. The year began with producing long and short-range plans in accordance with

Provincial Ministry of Education guidelines. The Band had negotiated control over their community school that had formerly been under the jurisdiction of the Federal Department of Indian Affairs. This was the first year the school was run by the Band's Education Authority who were required to submit plans to the Ministry of Education in Toronto.

The plans were useful as they provided our principal with guidelines for obtaining materials, resources or connecting with people in other isolated reserve schools across the North and outside the remote region in which we lived. Everything had to be flown in. Plans were helpful for coordinating educational events with other remote schools. For example, on one occasion Science North flew in with their portable planetarium, dinosaur fossil parts and replicas, live spiders, insects and snakes during the middle of a snowy winter. That experience allowed me to complement what was taught in the classroom with a 'field trip' that came to the community hall.

Subject matter

The following year I taught three different grades at various times each day. Three different sets of long-range, short-range, month, week and day plans were required. I found this demanding sometimes because I wanted to accommodate the needs of all the children and to co-construct the curriculum with them. The school also began a pilot project in which fifty percent of the curriculum was taught in English and fifty percent in Oji-Cree. Evaluations of my teaching were done five times that year because the ministry required documents to evaluate the use of English and Oji-Cree in a bilingual elementary school program.

The Education Authority obtained funding to purchase four computers for the classrooms. Through the introduction of this technology I was able to make creative links between teaching children, encouraging them and developing their interest, creativity and skill in learning to use English to express their own voices. The use of technology became the medium through which we were able to co-construct knowledge. We had access to two of the computers. I moved to each of my classes throughout the day and I moved the computers with me. In classes children wrote their stories. They learned about spelling, sentence construction and punctuation as they wrote and used technology. The children and I learned the use computers provided for us as we co-constructed our English language curriculum.

The reading-writing process was a dialectical one in which vocabulary was built and developed out of personal experiences about family and community. We found many opportunities to share English with each other. There was a small selection of books that were stored in the basement of one of the classrooms. Many books were more than twenty years old and

were donations from schools in cities and towns that no longer needed them. I catalogued a large portion of the books that I felt would be useful as research or reading material. The children developed reading and research skills, in addition to their critical skills as we discussed books. The old books were also used as part of a class book club. Children could take home books for their enjoyment and to practice their reading. The book club was successful, but I still felt that there was a need for more, current and better books. With three other teachers, I became part of a committee that approached a book company in Toronto to hold a community book fair where children and adults could purchase books. A portion from sale of books allowed us to purchase additional books for our classroom libraries.

Milieu

In our reading program children learned how to record the title and author of a book when they requested a shared reading. Our class also grew to enjoy the work of many authors and we eventually submitted letters to one author describing what we liked about her work. That author responded. On another occasion all class members submitted forms to a university that was interested in forging early relationships with very young people so that they might be informed about what a university is and how children might consider possibilities that lie ahead in pursuing post secondary education. The children always wrote stories and also shared their writing with other classes in the school. They used reading and writing for many purposes.

Other opportunities for writing came when children in a school in England wrote and asked the children to tell them about themselves and their community. The children and I collaborated in creating a book that contained drawings, paintings and writing in which they discussed who they were and described the community. I laminated the pages and the band office bound them. The book was mailed to the school in England. Later we received a yearbook containing photographic, historic and current information about the school. I had hoped to receive writing from the children in the other school that we could have shared, needless to say this never happened. The school wanted to learn about Indians (sic) in Canada and what they did in their community.

I really felt that it was a different kind of sharing that had occurred between us as learners in two different schools, in two different communities, in two different countries. Perhaps the messages we each received and our perceptions were very different about what it means when someone says 'we would like to learn about you and your community and what you do there'. I understood my feeling of dissonance at the sight of the book.

Everything was so well put together, so polished, a professional document meant to create a particular impression about a school. Then I thought again. We had been asked to tell about who we were, our community and what we did there. The children wrote and painted pictures about our community. It was just a different kind of sharing, each as valued and as valuable as the other.

In my own learning I felt that I learned best when I was able to connect with what the teacher was teaching. When I taught young learners in the community I developed relationships where lots of room was made for talk, discussion and problem solving, and where partner, small and whole group collaboration were emphasised. Applying these strategies in our classroom made for successful learning experiences in which the children were able to bring their personal knowledge about growing up in an environment familiar to them. I became the learner in many cases because I was a newcomer to the isolated fly-in community.

Developing a classroom curriculum for learning English became a collaborative experience in which we were able to relate to each other on personal levels about our views, family relationships and day-to- day events. Journal writing was a time to record our experiences and feelings about the previous day's events. Children were not compelled to share these entries with other students, but I responded to every child's writing. We also found many opportunities for writing and reading. I created a book request chart containing pockets of paper and a folder for submitting favourite books that any child wanted to share with peers. I set up a classroom mailbox for notes, letters and cards that children could write and send to each other and to me. We wrote and compiled a monthly classroom newsletter. I also made a weekly habit of writing positive letters about a child's work and attitude toward peers in class, I selected three - four children each week so that everyone received positive constructive feedback. Letters were especially helpful for parents who were able to be a part of what we were doing in our classroom.

Some difficulty with the use of English arose in mathematics classes during the written problems, which is also a common difficulty for children whose first language is English. The children's own written math questions became a source for everyone in class to develop personal strategies for approaching written math problems. Thus, with plenty of practice on many problems and using strategies in which the children developed and created their own problems using similar formats they were able to understand and develop skill at reading and understanding how to approach written math problem questions.

Throughout my time at the school, in all the classes I taught I would take two or three days out of the year to photograph the children at work. I

always made certain that two sets of photographs were developed. I kept the first set in an album. The second set was placed on the classroom table and the children were allowed to select the ones they wanted. I did this to keep a personal and class record for us to share. The pictures sparked a lot of conversation and discussion among the children. It was another way for us to share what we remembered about what we had learned as we used English.

I used numerous strategies to encourage relationships among the children as they learned, such as peer partnering, small and large groups. Throughout my time I felt that I was learning along with the children. Rather than using methods of singling out children and having them demonstrate their competence in spoken English before the entire class, I found another way in which I was able to evaluate their use of the language through meaningful personal conversations about work we were doing.

With adult learners I learned that the use of the radio was important in teaching across the North. Every week in the distance education centre students set up the two-way radio connecting learners from across the North in an English class. It was my introduction to different ways that technology served learners and teachers in remote areas. After radio seminar sessions, I tutored students in their writing. I found that it was only through building relationships with the students that writing became a way in which they were able to express their understanding about what they had learned. These approaches made all the difference in how I related to people in the group I tutored and later was foundational to my work with university student teachers in course, workshop and practicum settings after returning to Toronto.

Pedagogy and Reflective Practices

Stories about learning and research in teaching provide openings for understanding and inquiry. Through my stories of lived experience I explored my understanding and perspective in two questions 'what is curriculum?' and 'what is teacher development?' I learned that my understanding of curriculum and teacher development is evolving through my personal experiences of dynamic interactive engagement in relationships with people within a place (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Teacher development is about my growth (Dewey, 1997) growing as a person and developing my pedagogy as a teacher who continues to cultivate relationships with learners in classroom. Stories can generate further questions about pedagogy that will improve and enrich learners' lives. As we continue to learn and develop our thinking and our understanding through reflective practices in research we can contribute to people's lives. The dialectic of research in education includes reflective practices as an on-

going conversation among researchers. These practices highlight the role of ethics in relationships we create with each other in the research process.

Ethics is about responsibility, fairness, and caring about the other and the self. Research in education is about responsible and compassionate conduct in actions that relate to those who open their lives to us as they share their stories of experience. Researchers demonstrate responsibility to a scholarly community when they present work that is done well, grounded in understanding and knowledge about past and current scholarship in the field. Moreover, a researcher's sense of ethics must include a vision of how one's own work might respond to the needs of people in the present and provide questions for further research.

Demonstrating the Holism of Research, Teacher Development and Pedagogy

In Moorish architectural design the arabesque is laid within and forms an inseparable part of the beauty of the entire design, so research, teacher development and pedagogy are inseparable components in the field of education. Other researchers use the image of the three-legged stool to illustrate the balanced connection between the three areas of research, teacher development and pedagogy. I capture the dynamics between the areas by emphasizing the dialectic throughout my reflection on the arabesque. The aesthetic linkage between the artistic and the scientific in the discovery of patterns and numbers is thus highlighted. In Islamic philosophy surrounding oneself with the beauty of design, immersing oneself in that beauty, and meditating on the oneness of the creator (Albarn et al., 1974; Gudiol, 1964; Wade, 1976) is intended to develop a critical sense of understanding of oneself in relation to other people, and our connections to the world. A paradox both simple and complex, the great mystery binds us all, yet, is within us and therein too lies this beauty that surrounds us. Ultimately, we need to be mindful of what we reflect upon as much as how we reflect in the execution of our practices. Reflective comes from the Latin reflectere - to bend back. Reflective practice is bending back to contemplate past experiences and to execute practices improving how one relates to other learners. Reflective practices grounded in relationships throughout the commonplaces demonstrate the dialectic between the subject matter, teacher, learner, and milieu. Like an arabesque, within the complexity lies the simplicity and beauty that allow me to draw inspiration for providing other learners with opportunities to develop their understanding and appreciation for themselves and their own creativity. I chant my mandala:

Arabesco...Arabesque...Arabesco...Arabesque...Arabesco...Arabesque...

Endnotes

1. The underlying premise in Moorish architecture affirms the skills of experimentation, hypothesizing, discovery, observation, procedure, methods and practices in science as inseparable from art. This is not a paper about philosophy, religion, science or art in Islam although in this narrative exploration I will touch on these topics as I discuss reflective practices. The purpose of arabesque designs is to create beauty, to immerse oneself in beauty, to meditate on the beauty of creation and the oneness of the creator. The integration of the artistic and scientific was key to the philosophical development and understanding of the individual within the community. Similarly, Berman (1981) refers to the mediaeval ourobouros, the image of a snake eating its tail to illustrate this idea of connection and integration. In my work the arabesque, as a metaphor for subjectivity, illustrates the mind-body connection. Body immersed within the dance, movement within physical, emotional, intellectual, and psychical connections to the historical beginnings of the arabesque. I am literally, a body of knowledge as I execute this arabesque movement.
2. In dance history many of the positions and movements were named for objects, ancient gods, or people e.g., a pose referred to as 'en attitude' in ballet movement and vocabulary was copied and added after dancing master Carlo Blasis saw the statue of Mercury by Giovanni da Bologna (1524-1608). The arabesque was copied from the flowing floral Moorish designs (Beaumont and Idzikowski, 1977; Wilson, 1974).

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